

THE KINGS DECLARATION

TO ALL HIS
SVBIECTS,

Of whatsoever Nation, Qualitie or Condition.

Published by His Majesties
Speciall Command.

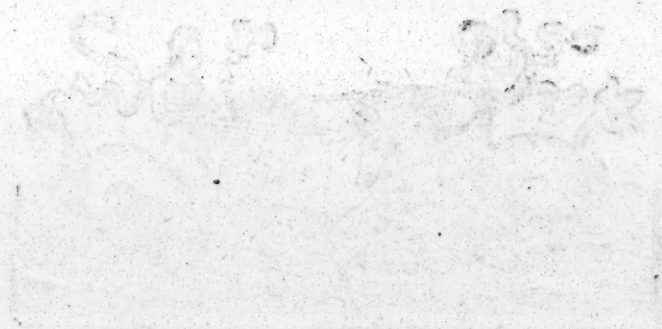


Printed in the Ycare, 1648.

DECLARATION

OF INDEPENDENCE

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DO HEREBY DECLARE



1776



Carisbrook Castle, 18. Jan. 1647.

To all my People, of whatsoeuer
Nation, Quality, or Condition.

A M I thus layd aside, and must I not
speak for my selfe? No! I will speake
and that to all my people, (which I
would have rather done by the way
of my two Houses of Parliament, but
that there is a publick Order, neither
to make Addresses to, or receive Message from me)
and who but you can be judge of the differences be-
twixt Me and my two Houses? I know none else:
for I am sure, you it is who will enjoy the happinesse,
or feele the miserie, of good or ill Government;
And wee all pretend who should run fastest to serve
you, without having a regard (at least in the first
place) to particular Interests: And therefore I desire
you to consider the state I am, and have beene in,
this long time, and whether my Actions have more
tended to the Publick, or my owne particular good:
for whosoever will looke upon me barely, as I am
Man, without that libertie (which the meanest of my
Subjects enjoyes) of going whither, and conversing
with whom I will; as a Husband and Father, without
the comfort of my Wife and Children; or lastly, as a
King, without the least shew of Authoritie, or power,

to protect my distressed Subjects; Must conclude me, not only voyd of all Naturall Affection, but also to want common understanding, if I should not most cheerfully embrace the readiest way, to the settlement of these distracted Kingdomes: As also, on the other side, doe but consider, the forme and draught of the Bills lately presented unto me, and as they are the conditions of a Treatie, ye will conclude, that the same spirit, which hath beene still able to frustrate all my sincere and constant endeavours for Peace, hath had a powerful influence on this Message: for though I was ready to grant the substance, and comply with what they seeme to desire: yet as they had framed it, I could not agree thereunto, without deeply wounding my Conscience and Honour, and betraying the trust reposed in me, by abandoning my People to the Arbitrarie and unlimited power of the two Houses, for ever, for the levying and maintaining of Land, or Sea-Forces, without distinction of qualitie, or limitation for Money-Taxes: And if I could have passed them, in tearmes, how unheard of a condition were it for a Treatie, to grant before-hand the most considerable part of the subject matter? How ineffectuall were that Debate like to prove, wherein the most potent Partie had nothing of moment, left to aske, and the other nothing more to give? So consequently, how hopelesse of mutuall compliance? Without which, a settlement is impossible: Besides, if after my concessions, the two Houses should insist on those things, from which I cannot depart; how desperate would the condition of these Kingdomes be, when the most proper & approved remedie, should become in-

ineffectual? Being therefore fully resolved, That I could neither in Conscience, Honor, or Prudence, passe those soure Bills; I onely endeavour'd to make the Reasons and Iustice of my Denyall appeare to all the world, as they do to Me; intending to give as little dissatisfaction to the two Houses of Parliament, (without betraying my owne Cause) as the matter would beare. I was desirous to give my Answer, of the 18 of *December* last, to the Commissioners Sealed, (as I had done others heretofore, and sometimes at the desire of the Commissioners) chiefly, because when my Messages or Answers were publicklic knowne, before they were read in the Houses; prejudiciall interpretations were forced on them, much differing, and sometimes contrary to my meaning. For example, my Answer from *Hampton-Court*, was accused of dividing the two Nations, becaule I promised to give satisfaction to the *Scots*, in all things concerning that Kingdome: And this last, suffers in a contrary sense, by making me intend to interest *Scotland* in the Laws of this Kingdome, (then which, nothing was, nor is, further from my thoughts) because I tooke notice of the *Scots* Commissioners protesting against the Bills and Propositions, as contrary to the interests & engagements of the two Kingdoms: Indeed, if I had not mentioned their dissent, an Objection, not without some probability, might have beene made against me, both in respect the *Scots* are much concern'd in the Bill for the Militia, and in severall other Propositions: and my silence might, with some Iustice, have seemed to approve of it: But the Commissioners refusing to receive my Answer Sealed;

I (upon the engagement of their, & the Governors, Honour, that no other use should be made, or notice taken of it, then as if it had not beene seene) read and delivered it open unto them: Whereupon, what hath since passed, either by the Governour, in discharging most of my Servants, redoubling the Guards, and restraining me of my former libertie, (and all this, as himselfe confest, meerly out of his owne dislike of my Answer, notwithstanding his before said Engagement) or afterwards, by the two Houses, (as the Governour affirms) in confining me within the circuit of this Castle, I appeale to God, and the world, whether my said Answer, deserved the reply of such proceedings: besides the unlawfulnessse for Subjects to Imprison their King. That, by the permission of Almighty God, I am reduced to this sad condition, as I no way repine, so I am not without hope, but that the same God, will, in due time, convert these afflictions into my advantage: in the meane time, I am confident to beare these crosses with patience, & a great equality of mind: but by what meanes or occasion I am come to this Relapse in my affaires, I am utterly to setke; especially when I consider, that I have sacrificed to my two Houses of Parliament, for the Peace of the Kingdome, all, but, what is much more deare to me then my Life, *My Conscience, and Honour*; desiring nothing more, then to performe it, in the most proper and naturall way, *A Personall Treatie*. But that which makes me most at a losse, is, the remembring my signal compliance with the Army, and their interests; and of what importance my Compliance was to them; and their often repeated Professions and ingagements for
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my just Rights, in generall, at *New-market* and *Saint Albans*, and their particular explanation of those generalls, by their Voted and Re-voted Proposals; which I had reason to understand I should be the utmost extremity would be expected from me; & that, in some things therein, I should be eased: (herin appealing to the consciences of some of the chiefe Officers in the Army, if what I have said be not punctually true) And how I have failed of their expectations, or my professions to them, I challenge them and the whole World to produce the least colour of Reason. And now I would know, what it is that is desired: Is it Peace? I have shewed the way (being both willing & desirous to performe my part in it) which is, a just compliance with all chiefe interests: Is it Plentie and Happinesse? they are the inseperable effects of Peace: Is it Securitie? I, who wish that all men would forgive and forget like me, have offered the *Militia* for my time: Is it libertie of Conscience? He who wants it, is most readie to give it: Is it the right administration of Iustice? Officers of trust are committed to the choise of my two Houses of Parliament: Is it frequent Parliaments? I have legally, fully concurr'd therewith: Is it the Arrears of the Army? Vpon a settlement, they will certainly be payd with much ease; but before, there will be found much difficultie, if not impossibilitie, in it.

Thus all the World, cannot but see my reall and unwearied endeavours for Peace, the which, (by the grace of God) I shall neither repent me of, nor ever be slackned in, notwithstanding my past, present, or future, sufferings; but, if I may not be heard, let every
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one judge, who it is that obstructs the good I would, or might do: What is it that men are afraid to heare from me? It cannot be Reason, (at least, none will declare themselves so unreasonable as to confesse it) and can it lesse be, impertinent or unreasonable Discourses; for thereby, peradventure, I might more justify this my Restraint, then the Causers themselves can doe; so that, of all wonders yet, this is the greatest to me but, it may be easily gathered, how those men intend to govern, who have used me thus: and if it be my hard Fate to fall, together with the libertie of this Kingdome, I shall not blush for my selfe, but much lament the future miseries of my People; the which, I shall still pray to God to avert; whatsoever becomes of me

CHARLES R.